

Comment on Proceeding 07-230:

I have been informed that even though the MMSI VHF radio numbers issued by BoatUS come from the FCC, the FCC's radio licensing system does not accept this MMSI numbers (or those issued by any other private entity) back into their database. This problem occurs when a boater who obtained a number from BoatUS, intended for those boating only on U.S. waters and not needing a license, later decides to cruise to foreign ports and applies for an FCC Ship Station License, as currently required. The BoatUS MMSI numbers are rejected by the FCC.

I am very concerned that the MMSI number I obtained via BoatUS will not be accepted when I apply for an FCC VHF license so that I may operate my boat in Canadian waters. If I am required to obtain a new MMSI number, I will incur considerable expense and inconvenience to have my VHF radio reprogrammed with the new number.

I most strongly urge that you take immediate steps to fix this problem so that privately issued MMSI numbers are "portable," the same policy granted to cell phone users. As more people retire and decide to go cruising, this problem is very likely to get worse. The time to correct it is now. The integrity of the U.S. Coast Guard's search and rescue system depends upon boaters properly registering their radios. Any unnecessary problems in doing so will deter people from registering or obtaining a license from the FCC.